

PS 635
.Z9
W145
Copy 1

635
39 W145

THE CORN-HUSKING.

A FARCE.

✓
BY E. S. WAITE.

BEREA, OHIO.

Copyright by E. S. Waite, 1891.

BEREA, OHIO:

1891.

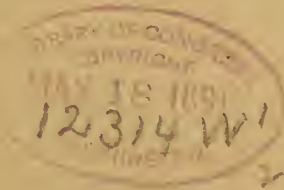
THE CORN-HUSKING.

A FARCE.

BY E. S. WAITE.

BEREA, OHIO.

Copyright by E. S. Waite, 1891.



BEREA, OHIO.

1891.

PS635
Z9W145

TMP92-007589

THE CORN-HUSKING.

A FARCE.

BY E. T. WAITE.

CHARACTERS.

DEACON RISING BUSTWEATHER.

PRIVELEGE BUSTWEATHER, his Wife Quakeress.

SILENCE BUSTWEATHER, their Daughter.

TIMOTHY ROUNDABOUT, the Lover.

ZEKE TANNERHORN, Hired Man.

ANXIOUS HETCHEL.

COUSIN SOPHIA ASHPENNY.

AUNT COMFORT HETCHEL.

MARTHA WASHINGTON JEFFERSON, small Col-
ored Girl.

IKE SKINNER.

TOPHRENIA BUTTON.

SOL RISEUP.

DUCAN HITSTRAIT.

ANAXASIA FIDDLEBONE.

PARSON SNOWUNDER.

JACK OLDERBUM.

AUNT POLLY KETCHUM.

JERUSHA MINT.

ABRAM AND DIANA.

SUKY HILT.

HUSKERS.

COSTUMES.

DEACON. Powdered wig, old style coat and rig.

MRS. B. Quakeress costume, drab, plain dress, white cap, spectacles, black silk apron.

SILENCE. Old style bride's costume.

TIMOTHY. Smart costume for young man of ye olden time.

ZEKE. Overalls, old hat and frock.

JACK OLDERBUM. Brown short coat and blue pants, jean.

AUNT POLLY KETCHUM. Gay flowered dress, shoulder shawl and gray hair.

JERUSHA MINT. Red and white brocaded calico dress, hair down.

ABRAM AND DIANA. In grotesque negro costumes and immense carpet bag.

SUKY HILT. White dress, pink sunbonnet or hat.

ANXIOUS. Gay dress long white muslin tie, long earrings.

COUSIN SOPHIA. Sunbonnet, trimmed in red roses, black shawl, blue dress, band-boxes and bundles.

AUNT COMFORT. Yellow straw bonnet, trimmed profusely, white shawl, green dress.

MARTHA. Red dress, yellow apron, red turban.

PARSON. Silk hat, huge shirt front, long black coat.

HUSKERS. Old fashioned costumes of all kinds.

SITUATIONS.

R, means right, as the actor faces the audience; L, left; C, center.

SCENE:—Barn. Hay hanging from mow, lanterns hanging around and candles in different parts of barn. Scythes, rakes, etc. Old-fashioned mirror hung for use on occasion. Pumpkins and milking stools sitting around. Two or three shocks of corn standing (if corn cannot be obtained change to an Apple Bee).

[Enter R. MRS. B. with pan of doughnuts and knitting, humming in a high key, "Bonny Doon, Ye banks and braes o' Bonny Doon."] Dearie me, these doughnuts are light enough for any husking bee, (*puts pan on a shelf,*) and surely they are light enough for a wedding (*sits knitting.*) A wedding, did I speak aloud? If Silence were here she would put her finger on her

lip and say (*raises hand to mouth*) hush, thee dear mother. Silence is something of a quakeress, though not as much as I would like. She does not say thee, and thou only when she speaks to me; but Silence is a good girl, a good girl. I wonder where she can be now, up in her room thinking of her lover, Timothy, I'll warrant, and he will come, he will come; but Oh! the wrath of Rising Bustweather (*raises both hands. Goes to the door and calls*) daughter! daughter!

SILENCE. Yea, mother, I am coming. (*Noise outside. Zeke, makes a racket.*)

MRS. B. What noise is that? (*Zeke singing,*) What melody! (*ZEKE, Sings*)

Silence, she is the gal for me,
She is the gal I like to see.

ZEKE (*Enters at R. with pail and spills seeds on the floor.*) Pot-hooks and splinters! Every time I gets to singing I spills sunthin'.

MRS. B. Yea, thou art very clever and handy, Zeke, and Silence, thou knowest, admires those qualities.

ZEKE. Oh! I knows you don't favor my courtin' your gal, but the Deacon is anxious enough; he knows that I can husk more corn than any other hired man he ever had or seed.

MRS. B. Anxious Hetchel wert thou talking about?

ZEKE. Oh, drat Anxious Hetchel. I wouldn't give an English tuppence for her hull body. Why Silence is——

MRS. B. There, thou hast said enough. (*Enter L. Silence. Points to pumpkin seeds.*)

SILENCE. What! mother, is this the preparation for the husking bee? A floor of pumpkin seeds to dance on.

MRS. B. Yea, yea, daughter, that is the preparation of thine admirer Zeke!

SILENCE. Well I'll not pick them up---of all the loitering, unhandy——

MRS. B. Tut, tut! Daughter, thou canst polish the spoons against the time of supper, whilst thou are wasting words with Zeke, and he can take himself and pail away.

ZEKE. And that I will and you'ns can pick up the seeds yourselves. *[Exit.]*

SILENCE. There mother, he has gone and left it for us.

MRS. B. Well I will see to it. He may not be so high stepping and independent when Timothy comes.

SILENCE. Thou art right mother, and I wish he were here now, I am tired to death of that Zeke Tannerhorn. He is a blunderer and just good enough for Anxious Hetchel. *[Exit.]*

DEACON B. *(Enters in great haste and bustle)*. Have you got the pumpkin pie baked and the doughnuts fried, mother? I calculate this to be the finest huskin' ever had in ———, and my gal to be the finest gal in town. There is many a youth a wanting her. Sy. Bumble, Tobias Husun, Ike Coon, and a dozen more, All of them is good lads, but none of them is up to Zeke Tannerhorn, he can husk more corn and husk it better than any two in these parts.

MRS. B. And has the least brains in his head of any one in these parts. *[Exit.]*

DEACON *(calling after her)*. What is that you say Privelege? There is no keeping these women quiet if they are quakers. *(Goes to door and halloos)* Privelege! Silence, light the candles, the huskers are coming. *(Deacon blusters around)*. Women have so much primping to do *(looks in glass)*. Why, I am not so very old. I can't half see *(rushes to door and shouts in anger)* Privelege Bustweather, are you coming here? *[Enter Mrs. B.]*

MRS. B. Yea, yea, Deacon, I am coming *(she lights the candles.)*

DEACON. You are enough to drive me wild.

MRS. B. Oh! the wrath of Rising Bustweather.

DEACON. Where is Silence? What is she doing? She looks well enough without stopping so long to dress.

MRS. B. Well she is very particular to-night, she wants to look exceedingly well.

DEACON. I am glad she is coming to her senses at last, ever since Timothy Roundabout went away she

has been as contrary as a mule, and as sharp as a ground hog's quills, over that miserable Tim, he is well named—Roundabout, hope he will never show his face in these parts again. But hark the huskers are coming. (*Singing in the distance, the deacon looks out.*) Well, I declare, there are loads of them, they will fill the old barn. [Exit R.]

MRS. B. (*Looking out.*) Well, if here doesn't come Cousin Sophia, and what a comfort she is any way.

COUSIN SOPHIA. (*Enters with band boxes and bundles.*) Yes I have got here after a while. The wagon broke down and Jeremiah had to go back, and I have been a blessed two hours in coming from the corners, with these band boxes. Where can I put them where they will be safe and out of the way of the noisy huskers. I have in that bundle catmint and sage mixed, that is for the Deacon when he has his bad spells.

MRS. B. Oh how thoughtful thou art.

COUSIN SOPHIA. And here is a package of boneset, yours wasn't strong enough when I was here before. You will find this is good for most everything and here is some pennyroyal, and smart weed, and here is a bundle of roots and arbs, warranted to cure all the ills that flesh is heir to. Father used to say, give me a dose of smart weed tea when he was under the weather, and it would straighten him right out quicker than all the doctors in ——— could, and I have brought you some home made yeast, I heard you had got to using something else—something you got from Boston, is that so? Now tell me before I take my bonnet off, you know I have no patience with these new fangled things of no kind.

MRS. B. Thee doesn't think I would use store yeast cousin Sophia. Come let us go up to the house and put away thy things. Silence will want to see thee.

COUSIN SOPHIA. Yes I have brought her a great deal of good advice. These girls need it. [Exit cousin Sophia and Mrs. B.]

(*Huskers come onto stage now, singing and carrying milking stools, and are welcomed by the Deacon, Mrs. B, Silence and Cousin Sophia, who come on from side R. Huskers sit on floor, pumpkins and stools, and commence husking in high glee*)

TOPIHRENIA BUTTON. Now you Sol Riseup, I want you to understand that I did not come to this husking bee to sit side of you all the time. You stick tighter to me than a grey-back to an old soldier.

SOL. Why Freny, you know you said I might. *(laughter.)*

FRENY. Stop your noise! You tell everything you know and more too.

DUCAN HITSTRAIT. Wouldn't I like to have my gal tell me that. He, he, he.

SOL. You are a brag, aint you though. Bet you wouldn't dare to kiss her in the dark, let alone a fore folks.

DUCAN HITSTRAIT. Well I'll show you. *(Crosses floor, kisses Anaxasia Fiddlebone; gets slap; all laugh and point to Anaxasia, crying shame! shame!)*

AUNT POLLY KETCHUM. Jerusha, can't you speak us a piece.

JERUSHA. I don't know, may be I can. *(comes forward and speaks "Money Musk," by B. F. Taylor, from "The Old Barn." At close applause.)*

DEACON. Zeke, have you found any red ears yet?

ZEKE. Yes, here's one. *(Jumps up and kisses the first girl near him.)*

AUNT POLLY. Now, Ike Skinner, you have been to singing school all winter to Setville and can't you sing the "Old Oaken Bucket," and we'll all join in the chorus. *(Ike sings and all join chorus.)*

(Enter L. Abram and Diana, runaway slaves.)

MRS. B. Well, Deacon, we have some strangers here. Doesn't thee see them?

DEACON. Wall, I declare, Privelege whar in creation did they hail from. *(Pushes his specks up and stands in wonder at them. All stare amid, such exclamations as "deu tell!" "my sakes!" "hunky-dory!" etc.)*

ZEKE. Did ye come from old Kentuck', uncle?

PARSON. Can you give us your names, sister and brother?

ABRAM. Our names am just Abram and Diana. We is poor chilun from Virginia run'd away.

AUNT POLLY. Aint you hungry poor things.

DIANA. Yah, dat we 'be honeys, can't you gib us a doughnut. (*Mrs. B. brings pan of doughnuts and they help themselves. Abram finally takes the pan and empties the contents into a carpet sack.*)

DIANA. Missus, we smelled some pumpkin pie as we comed along.

DEACON. Get them some, Privelege. We ought to help these poor creatures. You are going to Ohio I s'pose.

ABRAM. Yes sah, we is. Heaven bless you (*to Mrs. B., who brings in two pumpkin pies. Abram takes one and Diana takes the other and they begin to eat them.*)

SILENCE. (*Creeps up to Mrs. B. and says.*) Mother, they will eat up everything.

MRS. B. No, no, child, I guess not.

ABRAM. Well, mother we must be goin'. (*Abram and Diana go out R. eating pie.*)

DEACON. Parson, we can't help such people any to much, can we.

PARSON. No sir, we can't.

AUNT POLLY. Deacon, nobody is husking.

DEACON. That's so, (*all resume husking*) but then you know, Aunt Polly, we don't have such company every day.

ALL. Did you ever see the like of them. (*The young folks run to the door at R. to watch them go down the road.*)

MRS. B. Suky, the Deacon would like to hear you sing "Husking Corn" (*by E. E. Todd.*) (*Suky sings; all join chorus. Several huskers find red ears of corn and claim privelege of kisses.*)

JACK OLDERBUM. Well, I wish somebody would sing "If I was as young as I used to be." I heard a feller sing that when I was down to York, and I tell you what if he didn't sing nobody ever did.

DEACON B. I used to sing that myself, Jack.

ALL. Sing it! Sing it!

DEACON. Seems to me cousin Sophia used to sing pretty well.

AUNT POLLY. Oh yes; Sophia wont you please sing for us.

COUSIN SOPHIA. Why certainly I will if the Deacon will sing that piece you wanted him to.

ALL. Yes you will Deacon, wont you.

DEACON. Wall I'll think about it.

COUSIN SOPHIA. Well, you know that I'm no singer, but I'll do the best that I can. But see here; Sol Riseup hadn't we better sing "Ruben and Rachel," for them.

SOL. Well, may be we kin, we can try anyhow. (*They sing "Ruben and Rachel"—duet by Harry Birch; at close applause. Anxious passes apples around, young folks throw skins over shoulder to form initials. Anaxasia throws one and she and Silence exclaim T. R.*)

SILENCE. Timothy Roundabout!

[*Horn blows outside.*

ALL. (*Shout.*) Whose come now.

ZEKE. Why, its the stage Most likely bringing some company to Deacon Bustweather.

SILENCE. (*To Mrs. B.*) He doesn't know who its going to bring. (*Enter Timothy Roundabout and Martha Washington Jefferson. He boldly walks up to Silence and kisses her, and shakes hands with Mrs. B. amid many exclamations of astonishment from the whole party.*)

DEACON. (*Walks up to Timothy in great anger and says*) What does this mean?

MRS. B. It is a wedding to-night and Timothy has come to see thy daughter married.

DEACON. A wedding! and who is the groom? It will be Zeke Tannerhorn and no other, or my name is not Rising Bustweather.

MRS. B. Oh! the wrath of Rising Bustweather (*raising both hands.*)

DEACON. If the heavens fall Silence Bustweather shall never marry that scapegoat (*turning to Timothy.*) Why are you here sir, at this gathering of my friends and kin? You, a wild hoodlum that you are; what is the meaning of all this (*rushes wildly around and pushes*

Timothy away from Silence).

MRS. B. Oh! the wrath of Rising Bustweather.

DEACON. She shall never marry him. Zeke Tannerhorn, where are you?

ZEKE. Here I are, Deacon. Shall I take him by the neck? *(Silence rushes between them).*

SILENCE. I will marry Timothy, father. I love him better than the whole world; and as for Zeke, I will never marry him *(stamps foot)*. Why I had rather go to a nunnery than to marry him.

(Timothy takes out a handful of gold, shows it to Deacon and Zeke).

TIMOTHY. I have plenty more Deacon. I have not been idle while I have been away. I have earned the right to claim your daughter, and have now come to take my bride, and we are now ready for your blessing and the parson.

ZEKE. Not so long as I can wield a club.

TIMOTHY *(laughing)*. Why, Zeke, see here; you take this *(hands him money)*, go down to *(name a local tailor)*, and get a fine suit of clothes; come back and Anxious Hetchel will marry you.

ANXIOUS. Will I?

TIMOTHY. And we will have a double wedding.

ZEKE. By the great horned spoons! I never knowed what it was to be borned with a silver spoon in your mouth afore; it means a twenty dollar gold piece in your hand more likely. I'd ruther have it that way any how. Silence is purty enuff, and if you want her bad enough to pike all the way up from Boston you can have her for all me. I guess she would be a leetle too nice for me any how, and she might want to spend this money and Anxious would keep it.

ANXIOUS. That I would.

ZEKE *(crying)*. I ken swaller my feelin's I guess, seein's that Silence, at the last minit, has concluded to marry you. *[Exit Zeke crying.]*

SILENCE. Timothy, you know I never had any thought of marrying Zeke.

TIMOTHY. I know you never had, my dear *(Puts arm about Silence)*.

DEACON. What, you marry my daughter; you cannot compare with Zeke. He is industrious, obedient, and owns as much as a pig and a sheep,

SILENCE. Yes, he is a regular sheep's head himself.

DEACON. Silence is your name but it is only in name. You are always ready to say a word against Zeke; but he, mark my word, is good enough for you, or any girl that dances.

ANXIOUS. Yes, that is so.

DEACON. Now here is Anxious Hetchell, as good a girl as need be, who is willing at any time to become Mrs. Tannerhorn.

ANXIOUS. Am I?

DEACON. And you, Timothy Roundabout, I've knowed you ever since you were born, and up to the time you went away three years ago, you was a harum scarum, good-for-nothing, and did not have as much as an old jack-knife and now you come back all dressed, up in store clothes, and bring this black gal with you and claim to be rich. What have you to say for yourself, ha?

TIMOTHY. Well, I've just this much to say, that you hadn't ought to object to our marriage without good reason. Since I've been gone I have not forgotten Silence, nor has she forgotten me, and this "husking" was planned by us and your wife knew all about it.

DEACON. I don't doubt that.

TIMOTHY. And I am in partnership with my uncle James, and you all know him and if you don't believe what I say, just find out from him. And as Silence is of age to-day, why, she can choose for herself, and as for the little darky gal I brought her from a cruel master and I intend that she will be a nice little help to Silence when we are settled in our new home, and now, Martha Washington Jefferson, can't you dance us a jig and sing us a song; try it. (*Martha sings and dances "Nellie Bly" by S. C. Foster.*) [*Zeke enters R.*

TIMOTHY. Hello, Zeke, you have got back have you; you look fine. Where is Anxious?

ZEKE. I don't know as she will have me now.

AUNT COMFORT. No, indeed she wont. Now see here, I've got a little something to say in this matter to this company. my niece Silence Bustweather is all well enough in her way, but my daughter Anxious is not going to be made fun of by her or anybody else. Maybe you think just because Tim Roundabout has turned out to be somebody that there aint anybody else in —— but him, but I know better. I think she can find somebody.

ANXIOUS. Yes, mother, I think I can. I propose to marry somebody who admires me, I am not as anxious as you think, sir. (*turns to Zeke*) to marry you, although folks have made you look better than common. I suppose you think (*speaks to huskers*) I will have to be an old maid if I don't marry Zeke.

JACK OLDERBUM. (*Comes to Anxious side.*) No you wont, I intend to marry you myself and it will suit me first rate to have the ceremony take place now.

ALL. Why Jack Olderbun!

HUSKERS. (*Shout*) Two weddings; Aunt Privelege let's have two weddings; Deacon, let's have two weddings. What say you? (*Deacon hems and haws.*)

MRS. B. Let's have two weddings, my dear Deacon.

DEACON. I—I—I don't know my dear, but you women always get what you start for. I suppose I will have to give in.

ALL. (*Shout*). Where's the parson! (*Parson comes to front, Deacon and wife, Timothy and Silence, Anxious and Jack Olderbun, Cousin Sophia and Aunt Comfort form in semi circle for the marriage ceremony. Huskers stand back of them. Parson reads following from book.*)

PARSON. (*To first couple*) You will please to join your right hands. What is your name? (*To Timothy.*)

TIM. Timothy Roundabout.

PARSON. Do you promise to supply this woman with drygoods and hair pins as long as she shall exist?

TIM. I do.

PARSON. Will you promise to be silent if she should get angry, and will you promise to get in plenty of kindling wood so that she may get up early and build the fire for you and make the breakfast?

TIM. I do.

PARSON. Will you promise to be kind to her at house-cleaning time, and will you always ask her consent before joining the Masons, the I. O. O. F's, the Knights of Pythias, the S. of V's, the Blue Bottle Greens, the Sons of Stay-at-Home Clubs, etc?

TIMOTHY. I do.

PARSON. Will you promise never to stay out after 10 o'clock at Apple Bees, Kissing Bees, Barn Raisings, and will you promise not to drink too much at pig-killing and sheep-washing time?

TIMOTHY. I do.

PARSON. Well and good. (*To Silence,*) Now what is your name?

SILENCE. Silence Bustweather.

PARSON. Silence, you have undertaken a wonderful journey and you will do well to answer me a few questions. In the first place are you bound to marry this man instead of Zeke?

SILENCE. Yes sir, I am.

PARSON. Very good then, now pay attention to this solemn catalogue of questions. You see how smartly Timothy has answered up. Now do you promise to love, honor, and obey this man as long as you shall both be on earth?

SILENCE. I do.

PARSON. Do you promise to keep house on the stay-at-home plan and never to spend any time in gossiping?

SILENCE. I do.

PARSON. Do you agree to see that he does not with your consent fall in love with any other women?

SILENCE. I do.

PARSON. Then I pronounce you man and woman, providing that nobody objects to these persons being talked to by me in this way. (*Deacon begins to say something but is calmed by Mrs. B.*)

PARSON (*to next couple*). You may join your right hands (*they join left hands, then one right and the other left*).

MRS. B. Have patience, Parson, they are only children (*then Parson joins their right hands himself.*).

PARSON (*to Anxious*). What is your name?

ANXIOUS. Anxious Hetchel, if you please, sir.

PARSON. Well, do you promise to take this man and try to love him all the time?

ANXIOUS. Yes, indeed I will.

PARSON. Do you promise to ask him for only a shilling a month for pin-money unless you want more?

ANXIOUS. I do.

PARSON. Do you promise to always remember the "preacher in charge" with a roll of butter every time you churn unless it is poor butter?

ANXIOUS. I will.

PARSON. Do you promise to give him only one curtain lecture a week and that sparingly?

ANXIOUS. I do.

PARSON. Do you promise never to vote until you have a chance?

ANXIOUS. I do.

PARSON (*to Jack*). What is your name?

JACK. Jack Olderbum.

PARSON. Will you take this woman in all kinds of weather to love and serve her, and will you reverence and fear her?

JACK. Yes—fear her.

PARSON. Do you promise to give her all she wishes to eat?

JACK. Yes sir, if she don't eat too much.

PARSON. Do you promise to buy her at least one calico dress after she is your wife?

JACK. I guess so.

PARSON. Will you always be at home after supper and spend no evenings out without her willing consent?

JACK. Have I got to promise that?

PARSON. Yes sir.

JACK. Well, I'll promise if I must.

PARSON. Everybody at this corn husking has witnessed this ceremony and I now pronounce this couple to be man and woman.

[Then follows congratulations. Mrs. B, Aunt Comfort and Martha pass pans of doughnuts and pumpkin pies; then after this Zeke shouts, "Who will dance Money Musk with me—where is the fiddler." Choose partners and dance Money Musk, and at close all come to front, bridal party in center, and all sing "Auld Lang Syne" or any old song, for a good night.]

FINIS.

A drill at the close is a good finis. A captain who understands the Amazon drill, or any other army drill, and twenty or thirty young ladies in red, white and blue costumes.

FINALE.









LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



0 015 793 136 2